



The AFT Seattle Community Colleges Local 1789 Executive Board denounces the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, David McAtee, and countless others by police and the on-going assault on unarmed Black people. We condemn the systematic terrorizing of people of color who fear even the most basic of daily activities, both in their communities and in their own homes. We also recognize that the strength of the labor movement is built on the foundational belief that the lives of all people have inherent value. At the center of the labor movement is the belief that we all must fight together for fairness, justice, and dignity for everyone—regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Yet the 400-plus years of racism begotten by the history of slavery in the U.S. has given rise to new generation of young Black people and other people of color subjected to the barbarity of modern-day lynching, often at the hands of those who should be protecting people, not destroying and ending lives. The tragic and violent loss of so many Black lives and the extreme racial bias with which these cases are being handled have exposed the deep, unhealed wounds of systemic racism in America. The recent murders of Tony McDade and Ahmaud Arbery at the hands of white supremacists are further evidence of this pervasive crisis. This racism targets Seattle College District students, staff, and faculty with the threat of violence. Furthermore, well-documented is the fact that Black people are suffering disproportionately during the current pandemic and economic crisis. These living conditions impact faculty working conditions and faculty working conditions are student learning conditions, rendering the work of both teaching and learning extremely difficult.

As leaders in the labor movement, we have a responsibility to build a safe and just society for all people. As we mourn, protest, and honor those who risk their lives for this just cause, we must also take action to bring about real and lasting change. As educators, we must use our power to reform ourselves, to end the school to prison pipeline, and to otherwise transform the systems that not only disadvantage but also lead to the premature deaths of people of color.

To that end, AFT Seattle commits to the following:

- Providing financial support for organizations that work to build an anti-racist society, including bail funds and community funds for protesters;
- Holding our local and affiliate unions accountable for eliminating racist and exclusionary practices;
- Participating in conversations about changing the city of Seattle's budget priorities by increasing allotments for housing, healthcare, and education;
- Making a deliberate and consistent commitment to learning about and advancing a full dialogue on racial disparities and violence in all of our homes, classrooms, and communities.

AFT Seattle Community Colleges Local 1789 stands in solidarity with all of those who fight injustice, and today we give our love and support to those who are fighting back against racism and police violence.

In solidarity,

The AFT 1789 Executive Board